

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0170

EXDIS

R.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJ: CHEN YI-SUNG STATEMENT ON NORMALIZATION

REF: PEKING 42

1. CHEN YI-SUNG, FORMER TAIWANESE OPPOSITION POITICIAN AND CURRENTLY MEMBER OF PRC'S NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS STANDING COMMITTEE, MADE STATEMENT ON US-PRC NORMALIZATION DURING A STOPOVER IN JAPAN ON HIS WAY BACK FROM A YEAR-LONG STAY IN US. CHEN TOLD KYODO REPORTER IN "EXCLUSIVE" INTERVIEW THAT HE EXPECTED FULL NORMALIZATION IN 1978, BASED ON HIS INFORMATION THAT A "HIGH-RANKING STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL" WOULD VISIT CHINA IN MARCH TO PAVE THE WAY FOR NORMALIZATION.

2. CHEN ALSO CITED VIEWS OF "SOME AMERICAN INTELLECTUALS" THAT INSTEAD OF SECURING A CHINESE PLEDGE RENOUNCING USE OF FORCE AGAINST TAIWAN, US SHOULD BE SATISFIED WITH UNILATERAL DECLARATION BY PEKING THAT
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IT IS INTERESTED IN MAINTENANCE OF PEACE IN TAIWAN AREA. HE SAID FURTHER, ACCORDING TO KYODO, THAT "THE UNITED STATES HAS BEGUN TO SWITCH FROM THE PLICY OF MAINTAINING THE PRESENT REGIME IN TAIWAN TO THAT OF LAYING MAJOR EMPHASIS ON THE PROSPERITY AND LIVELIHOOD OF THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN".

3. WE RECALL THAT CHEN MADE SOME UNORTHODOX STATEMENTS FOLLOWING HIS DEPARTURE FROM CHINA A YEAR AGO WHICH WERE SUBSEQUENTLY PRIVATELY REPUDIATED BY PRC OFFICIALS. THUS WE ARE SKEPTICAL THAT CHEN'S STATEMENTS NOW ARE DIRECT REFLECTION OF A NEW LINE IN OFFICIAL PRC THINKING. NEVERTHELESS, THE STATEMENT ON A MARCH VISIT, ALTHOUGH GARBLED, COULD REFER TO HUANG CHEN'S INVITATION TO DR. BRZEZINSKI LAST NOVEMBER TO VISIT THE PRC. (MFA U.S. AFFAIRS DEPUTY DIRECTOR LIEN CHENG-PAO VOLUNTEERED TO USLO OFFICER EARLY THIS MONTH THAT A MARCH VISIT BY BRZEZINSKI WAS A POSSIBILITY.) SNCE A MARCH DATE IS NOT IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN, WE WONDER IF IT MIGHT HAVE COME FROM PRC OFFICIALS EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR TOKYO.

4. THIS IN TURN RAISES THE QUESTION HIS OTHER COMMENTS (SEE PARA 2) COULD LIKEWISE BE OFFICIALLY INSPIRED. WE NOTE THE PARALLEL BETWEEN CHEN'S STATEMENT ON THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND THE COMMENT BY MFA DIVISION DIRECTOR TING YUAN-HUNG (REFTEL) THAT THE PEOPLE ON TAIWAN "MAY EXPECT A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS FUTURE." IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT CHEN'S COMMENTS REFLECT OFFICIAL THINKING IN PEKING THAT SUCH "PEACEFUL" STATEMENTS BY THE CHINESE COULD LAY THE BASIS FOR NORMALIZATION WITHOUT BETRAYING HHE PRINCIPLES OF SOVEREIGNTY AND NON-INTERFERENCE. WE WOULD BE RELCUTANT TO DRAW ANY FIRM CONCLUSIONS, HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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UNTIL SIMILAR STATEMENTS COME FROM SOURCES MORE RELIABLE THAN THE MAVERICK MR. CHEN.

5. ONE TEST COULD COME DURING THE UPCOMING SESSIONS OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS AND THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE. IN PARTICULAR THE CPPCC -- AN ADVISORY BODY WHOSE MAIN FUNCTION IS IN UNITED FRONT WORK -- WOULD PROVIE AN APPROPRIATE FORUM AT WHICH TO REFORMULATE THE CHINESE POSITION ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF A PEACEFUL "LIBARATION" OF TAIWAN. WOODCOCK

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